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# HOME RE-UNION.

## TWO PAPERS

READ AT THE

DIOCESAN CONFERENCE,

*Held at Truro, October 27th and 28th, 1881,*

BY THE

RIGHT HON. EARL NELSON

AND THE

REV. PAUL BUSH,

*(Rector of Duloe),*

WITH THE DISCUSSION THAT FOLLOWED.

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# Truro Diocesan Conference, 1881.

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## PAPERS AND DISCUSSION UPON HOME RE-UNION.

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The Rev. P. BUSH (Duloe) moved "That the objects for which the Home Re-Union Society exists are worthy of earnest and practical support." He said :—The first thought which will naturally suggest itself to those now present, who have not given the subject of Home Re-union much consideration, will probably be, that the time of this Conference could be more profitably employed by considering a more practical subject. They will remind us how the eirenicon which a few years since was addressed to the Wesleyan Conference, praying that large and influential religious society, which now numbers its five million communicant members, like another eirenicon which was proposed by the Church of Rome by one of the most devoted of English Churchmen, was rejected. They will tell us that so long as there is so much disunion among English Churchmen all our efforts for the re-union of Christians will be vain, and that the only answer we shall receive from Nonconformists will be, "Settle your own differences before you invite us to join you."

But can we accept these as reasons for not promoting Home Re-union? When we remember how earnestly our blessed Lord prayed in the Temple the night before His Passion, in that prayer, which has been called by the Fathers of the Church, "The Great Intercession," that the visible union of His disciples might be a witness to the world that the Father had sent Him, dare we say that He prayed for what has been described as a "benevolent dream"? Dare we say that the union of Christians, who came so very near His heart, is no concern of ours? that we may go on, year after year, without making any effort that those who are

now separated from us, may be one with us? Let these who are discouraged by the cold reception which the Bishop of Lincoln's "Ireucum Wesleyanum" met with, take into account the number of Dissenting ministers who have sought, and still seek, ordination at that Bishop's hands. Let those who maintain that our own divisions incapacitate us from inviting other Christians to join our Church, remember that a diversity of ritual is not inconsistent with true loyalty to the Church and a hearty, unreserved assent and consent to her Book of Common Prayer.

It is true, indeed, that our divisions are a hindrance to us in our efforts to bring within the Church's fold those who are at present without; but are not these divisions often exaggerated? Is there not every year greater toleration of the different parties and schools of thought in the Church? Men meet together, clergy and laity, in Buri-decanal Synods, in Diocesan Conferences at Church Congresses, and the more they meet the more they learn in how much they agree, in how little they differ: in non-essentials there may be diversity, but in essentials there is unity, and in all things charity. If then, in spite of, or rather because of, errors without, and divisions within, it is our duty to promote re-union, how may we best do so? The Home Re-Union Society was formed some years ago for the purpose of "presenting the Church of England in a conciliatory attitude towards those who regard themselves as outside her pale, so as to lead towards the corporate re-union of all Christians holding the doctrines of the over-blessed Trinity and the Incarnation and Atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ." It is by working on the lines of this society, and under its guidance, that we shall best promote unity.

It was said, not long since, that "the several different Nonconformist bodies are simply different regiments in the same general army of the Church of Christ in England," and this would seem to be the opinion which, strange to say, some Churchmen have, that the Church of Christ in England is only one of many religious systems—all equally good; but it is not by ignoring the errors of Nonconformists, or lowering the standard of our teaching that we shall promote corporate re-union; but rather by maintaining the whole truth committed to us from the beginning, seeking to raise those up who have fallen short of the full teaching as revealed to us in the Bible. The Churchman who is persuaded to lay the foundation stone of



a Baptist Chapel, or to allow his name to be placed on the list of patrons of a bazaar in behalf of a Congregational Church, may acquire a momentary reputation for liberality, his broad Churchmanship will in all probability be applauded, and contrasted with the narrow and antiquated views of some of his neighbours; but such a proceeding will not have the desired effect of attracting any honest Dissenter to the Church, and is more likely to perpetuate divisions among Christians than to heal them. Nonconformists separated from the Church; not the Church from them: and we shall not win them back to the Church by ourselves becoming sectarian, even for a day. To do, or say, anything which might lead them to suppose that we regard their respective societies as, like the Church, "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets," would be to act as though no visible Church had ever been ordained of God, and must delay the coming of that time, which our blessed Lord prayed for, and His Church prays for, and which we know must come, when all shall be one.

But without surrendering one particle of that body of truth, which the Church holds, without compromising any Church principle, there are ways of promoting re-union, which are open to all of us, whether clergy or laymen. One way, need I say it? is by being courteous to Nonconformists; working with them whenever we can do so, without sacrificing truth to peace, as, e.g., in the cause of temperance, or by availing ourselves of such an opportunity as was offered us last July, when the Archbishop, 11 Bishops, and among them our own Diocesan, and many clergy and laity of the Church, united with the leaders of different sects, in inviting us to set apart a day for prayer and humiliation for the sins of our nation: and whenever we can work with them, it must not be in a half-hearted or patronizing way, as if it were an act of condescension on our part, and we were doing them a favour, but with all honesty and earnestness, and at the same time giving them the full credit of teaching the truth so far as we believe they have taught it; and they certainly have taught it, and do teach it more fully than some of us think.

Those who read the reports presented at the late Wesleyan Conference must have been struck with the reality of their work, and with the thorough way in which they do it. They must have been struck, too, with the small amount of bitterness which was manifested by the speakers. When we remember the sectarian

animosity of former days, may we not hope that the Christian spirit which the Home Re-union Society has ever shewn in its different controversies with Nonconformists is already bearing fruit? If we trace Dissent to its beginnings, it is quite impossible that we can acquit the Church of all blame in the matter; each sect bears witness to the omission of some Church teaching. Those who first separated from the Church did so, for the most part, because some Church doctrine, or practice, or privilege, was denied them; and no one can read the history of the early Methodists without a feeling of shame and sorrow that the Church should have allowed them to leave her, instead of enrolling them as a guild of church workers, as in fact they described themselves—"extraordinary messengers raised up to provoke the ordinary ones to jealousy." It was the Church's intolerance, or the Church's exclusiveness, or the Church's neglect of her duty in former years, dwarfing rather than nurturing their spiritual growth, spiritually starving them; it was this which induced many earnest men and women to leave the Church, and however wrong they were in leaving her, because of the spots and wrinkles which it was easy to detect, we in Cornwall cannot deny that God has worked by and through those who went out from us. We cannot deny that He has blessed the zeal of many who received no outward call to the ministry, and yet have taught the truth in a fragmentary imperfect manner. This is as true on the one side as it is true on the other that it is owing to the neglect of God's ordained ministers that our own institutions have failed to fulfil their mission.

Then again there is another reason for which the Home Re-union Society exists, and for which it deserves the hearty support of all churchmen, *i.e.*, because one of its objects is to remove those practical abuses in the Church's system which have so long been a stumbling block to all religious men—Churchmen and Nonconformists alike. Some abuses have already been removed; Churchmen of old clung to them, but they are gone. There are others which, though not gone, are going, such as the law of patronage, the absence of self-government and discipline, and the assumption by the Privy Council of spiritual powers! These are a sore injury to the Church, and prevent other Christians joining her; but the day is not far distant when we trust that these, too, will be reckoned among the evils of a former generation of Churchmen. Meantime, notwithstanding these evils, there is a growing approximation on the part of Nonconformists to the Church's system. Many of them

subscribe to one at least of her creeds. In the architecture of their sacred buildings, in the character of their services, in the forms used in conducting those services, in the dress and address of their ministers, the Church is there guide.

Surely, then, the time has come, when Churchmen should support those who are endeavouring, on the one hand, to remove the glaring anomalies and defects in the Church's system, and on the other hand, by forbearance and patient explanation to "instruct those who oppose themselves." By so doing, we shall not only relieve the Church of much that checks her growth, and injures her constitution, but may we not also hope that in time we shall teach Nonconformists, the truth—a truth, be it remembered, which many an English Churchman, aye, and English priest, of the last generation, was slow to believe—that the Church to which we belong is no new Church, dating from the Reformation, but one and the same with the Pre-reformation Church, and that while she is Protestant, she is also Catholic and Apostolic?—(applause).

Earl NELSON, seconded the motion. He said. It is needless to dwell on the importance of unity among all calling themselves by the name of Christ. Brotherly love is an essential part of Christianity. St Paul's declarations against schisms and divisions are clear and frequent. The Bible history of the unity of the early Church gives no uncertain sound, while our Blessed Lord's Prayer for unity that the world may know and accept His mission from the Father is overwhelmingly conclusive, that unity on the part of all professing Christians is a thing to be earnestly prayed for and striven after. Moreover, all Christians are at present prepared to allow this in the abstract, and to strive after unity according to their different lights. It is pleasing to believe that there are at the present time the foreshadowings of a spirit of unity, as if it was God's will that, out of the very intensity of our past strifes and bitternesses, there should grow up a yearning desire for unity and peace. There is a greater desire among some of the older Nonconforming bodies, so far to sink their original animosities, as to arrange for a frequent interchange of pulpits among those who once so grievously differed. Indeed they boast that they are willing to grant such an interchange with the clergy, if we would only recognise their status as ministers and allow them to preach in our churches. It is well known that a public liturgy and singing in Churches has become

a mark of unity instead of a cause of division. It is pretty freely admitted that one of the great objects of the Methodist Ecumenical Council was the promotion of re-union between the minor Methodist bodies and the Wesleyan Connexion.

It is well for us Churchmen to consider how far we can meet this spirit, and overrule it to the furtherance of God's honour and glory and the fulfilment of His will. Two things must be clearly understood. First, that the Church's desire for unity is based solely on a desire for the promotion of our common Christianity and for the true advancement of the kingdom of our common Lord. And all ideas of worldly triumph at the reconciliation of those that have gone from us, or of worldly aggrandisement and power that might accrue to the Church as a political body must be utterly discarded from our consideration. Secondly, that while we recognise in these movements among our Nonconformist brethren a right desire, we must avoid the danger of satisfying this with a sham. The unity to be sought after must be real, and based on sound foundations. It must be a unity by which we can be truly united with the whole Church from the beginning. In our common warfare against infidelity and error, it will not do to ignore 1,500 years of living Christianity; blotting out the labour of those who, having fought the good fight while on earth, now form the largest proportion of the Great Church at rest in the Paradise of God—that glorious company of witnesses before whom we are privileged to contend. It is this second principle which prevents us from at once meeting the Nonconformists half-way, lest we should satisfy a really true desire after unity by a phantom unity, which might, in some sort, have the semblance of unity without its real power and strength. The truth in love, if you will, not love gained for a time by the suppression of essential truths. Bearing these things in mind, let us see what can be gathered from Scripture as to our rule of life towards those who are at present either separated from us or being members of the same body do not hold our party shibboleths; for a very great step towards true unity will be gained if we strive to act towards these according to the true teaching and practice of our Lord Himself, as revealed to us in Holy Scripture.

The most frequently quoted text is S. Mark ix, 38-42, which seems to lay down a general rule of conduct towards individuals outside the Church—no one to be hindered who works in Christ's Name and so shews a living

faith. And it may be concluded by our Lord's remarks that we must be very careful lest we cause offence to any "of those little ones who believe in him" by ignoring the testimony of their good deeds, or by suggesting bad motives for them. "By their fruits ye shall know them," and this is further supported by the Apostles, who received the imperfect teaching of Apollos, and by the acceptance of the good works of Cornelius, when still a heathen, by the witness of the Holy Ghost. But our blessed Lord's practice is most fully exemplified by His kindly actions towards the Samaritans, who formed, in their relation to the Jewish Church, some analogy to the relation of the general body of Dissenters to the Church of the present day. No form of orthodox Nonconformity can be charged with so great a divergence from the Catholic Church as that which existed between the Jews and the Samaritans; therefore, if our Lord so acted towards them, how much more should we act with the same spirit of brotherly love towards those who are so much less estranged from us in fundamental principles? In the Old Testament the original sin of Jeroboam in separating from the worship at Jerusalem is never forgotten, and the Samaritans of our Saviour's time inherited, or at least had adopted, that schism. Our blessed Lord never forgot the position due to the Jewish Church until she was finally cast away. He enjoins obedience to the priesthood as sitting in Moses' seat, notwithstanding their manifold corruptions: the 70 are forbidden to enter into any city of the Samaritans, but are sent forth to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. And it is nowhere recorded that our Lord ever entered into a Synagogue of the Samaritans, though He so frequently applauded their individual faith. Yet towards them as individuals He deliberately broke through that rule of cruel and embittered feeling which existed between the Samaritan and the Jew, and He acknowledged the advanced faith shewn by many of them in the parable of the Good Samaritan, in the commendation of the thankful leper, and in his patient teaching of the woman at Jacob's well. And in this history there is a further and important lesson to be learnt. It is somewhere prophesied in reference to these very Samaritans and the Jewish Church, "I will provoke you to jealousy by those that are no people, and by a foolish nation will I anger you." And so we find in the midst of their undoubted schism which our Lord rebuked, "Ye worship that which ye know not." "We worship that which we know, for

Salvation is of the Jews." They had yet attained to a greater faith than many of the believing Jews, and acknowledged Christ not only as the Messiah on the testimony of the woman, but "we have heard him ourselves and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world." This was no empty boast, for at a later period of our Lord's Ministry, when the immediate destruction of Jerusalem was at hand, and the new kingdom was about to be established, the order went forth "To preach the Gospel in Judea and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth"; and then large numbers of these schismatics gladly received the word and entered the new kingdom. There are two great lessons here; 1st. "Not to ignore, or quench, or harden the pure faith that many a one who differs from our standard of belief manifests in his daily life." There is a terrible tendency of the human heart to exaggerate our own goodness and to judge everybody by the higher standard of belief and morals, which our social position and advantages, far more than any innate goodness of ours, have almost compelled us to attain to. We see immorality in people under various forms, and we judge them very harshly by comparing them with ourselves, forgetting our own social advantages and the greater temptations and varying rules of conduct by which their daily life is surrounded. Much of the pride and stubbornness and political rancour of the Dissenter is aggravated, if it has not been originally caused, by our behaviour towards him; whereas a tender, loving, humble spirit, free from all worldly considerations, must make its way and win the promised reward.

2nd. We must be careful not to forget the provoking to jealousy, which the different bodies of Dissenters were designed to effect, when they went out from us, as they emphatically did in consequence of some special error of our own, or some unduly neglected teaching, which they forsooth may have afterwards unduly exaggerated. As a Church we are too apt to maintain our own perfection, and to refuse to learn the many shortcomings which the various Nonconformist bodies would point out to us, or to acknowledge the many good things which they have been permitted to accomplish. They were before us as a body in the crusade against intemperance. They have laboured with us for years for the suppression of the slave trade and for the diffusion of the Bible, and have shamed us in times past by their missionary zeal. When we look back to our past history, we can rejoice in the stand they made

against persecuting laws and against Erastianism, and when we look back at our past neglects we must allow that a great deal of the sin of schism must lie at our door by our acquiescence as a Church in evils, from many of which we have now happily been delivered. But there are many evils which still remain, which look much more ugly from without than to us who have been obliged to get accustomed to them. I will name five. 1. Laws regulating the sale of patronage. 2. The unreality of the *congrégation d'église*. 3. The practical exclusion of large sections of our people from any part in the ministry. 4. The want of sufficient elasticity in the arrangement of our services to meet the religious feelings and necessities of all classes, and of all the variously constituted minds of our people. 5. Our own dissensions and misunderstandings.

If we really yearn for unity we must strive to remove from among us those evils which cause so great stumbling blocks in our brother's way. Of these the two first can be remedied by legislative means, and the religious Dissenter, for the sake of true religion, might be expected to help towards that end. The third is a matter which must be taken up from within the Church. Endowed scholarships in our Theological Colleges should be at once inaugurated, not only to help those of the Nonconformists who are moved to join the ministry of the Church, but for enabling men of all classes who have a call for the ministry to be duly prepared for it, however poor their worldly position may be. It is a blessed thing to have a highly educated ministry, and to have one supplied from the highest classes of our people, but it cannot be defended on political any more than on distinctly religious grounds that the members of any class should be, as a rule, practically excluded from the ministry in consequence of the absence of worldly means. The fourth evil points to the importance of unity as opposed to uniformity, and to the necessity of that variation of ritual which, under judicious regulations, might prove most suitable to meet the religious feelings and necessities of the variously constituted minds of our people. To this end the circuits of the itinerant preachers of the Primitive Methodists might be made a valuable model on which to organise a preaching lay agency in the Church; for I am am convinced that to many of our people the alternate reading and exposition of Scripture, with hymns and extempore prayer, with liberty to give vent to their feelings is evidently an acceptable means of encouraging

spiritual growth. My idea of unity would be that all should receive the Sacraments of the Church at the hands of God's duly appointed ministers, side by side with the free workings of the Spirit in our lay members, but in unity with instead of in opposition to the Church's more regular ministrations.

Fifth.—In considering under the fifth head our own internal divisions, we really touch upon the only vital points which should stand in the way of complete re-union. And yet in these so called vital points how little real difference there is between us! Those who ignore sacramental teaching do so very much from an entire misunderstanding about the views of others concerning it. The man who protests against sacraments fears lest they should be put in the place of Christ, although they are only received by those who hold them as the means through which Christ brings His blessings to the souls of His people. Those who protest against faith only protest against a formal faith without fruit, and those who protest against works protest against a trust in our own works as a means of Salvation; but what true child of God ever could have faith without shewing forth imperceptively the fruits of it; or what true child of God could ever hope to do anything except amid continuing shortcomings, and by the help alone of God the Holy Ghost; or how is it possible to conceive a true child of God who could claim any justification except through the all sufficient merit of our beloved Lord? St Paul defines faith "as the assurance of—or the giving substance to—things hoped for, the proving or test of things not seen." And yet what wonderful mistakes are made as to the possession of this grace. It is commonly held that the Catholic from his supposed trust in outward forms must miss the grace altogether; while the Protestant, because he has realised certain feelings in his own heart of which he can give account, becomes in the eyes of many the sole possessor of this grace. But there is just the sam-risk that a trust in religious feelings, which are quite as apparent for the time being as any forms can be, might damp a true faith according to St. Paul's definition of it, and might end in a belief in nothing that was only hoped for, and therefore not tangible, and in the rejection of everything that is only spiritual and therefore unseen. St. Paul lived in the realisation of the unseen world, and accepted blessings as very real which could only be spiritually discerned.

The best chance of re-union is a rallying round those



old truths held by the undivided Church, and clearly proveable by God's Holy Word. These are the common inheritance of us all, but many of these are in danger of being lost altogether from the very existence of those divisions which we all profess to deplore. The first advertisement to the "Tracts for the Times," published in 1834, concludes with a paragraph which is worthy of careful consideration :—"The Church of Christ was intended to cope with human nature in all its forms, and surely the gifts vouchsafed to us are adequate for that gracious purpose. There are zealous sons and servants of her English branch who see with sorrow that she is defrauded of her full usefulness by particular principles and theories of the present age, which interfere with the execution of one portion of her commission; and while they consider that the revival of this portion of truth is especially adapted to break up existing parties in the Church, and to form instead a bond of union among all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, they believe that nothing but these neglected doctrines faithfully preached will repress that extension of Popery for which the ever multiplying divisions of the religious world are too clearly preparing the way." The effect of this teaching, begun nearly fifty years ago, has resulted in a greater revival of religious life than ever took place within the same period in any branch of the Church, and has in the main already brought about a greater unity in the employment by all of larger means of grace than could have been safely dealt with before the true teaching of the Catholic Church was clearly accepted among us. The more we realise our connection with Christianity from the beginning, and hold firmly the great doctrines upon which its foundation rests, the more shall we be brought out of the trammels of party strife into the true unity of the Body of Christ. On these grounds I heartily second the resolution commending the Home Re-union Society to the practical support of this Diocese, feeling assured that the principles and the mode of action which I have ventured to recommend you to adopt are in direct accordance with the rules of this society. The diocesan secretary of the society is the Rev W. S. Lach-Szyrma--(applause).

The Rev H. OVERY said the question of Home Re-union came very near the hearts of every clergyman in Cornwall. One of the great obstacles in the way of unity was the often fatal delusion that a man was brought into the chapel simply with the object of being saved. He did not recognise the higher, better, and nobler object of

becoming a member of the Catholic Church of Christ, and to live in accordance with the high aim of the Christian to do his own duty as a member of the one body—(applause). Christians should live as members of the one Body, and it was in this idea of catholicity that dissenters were deficient. Another obstacle was the family feeling, which too often existed; and a third was a feeling that the liturgy of the Church was not to them so full of the spirit of love as their own extempore prayers. On this point he thought it was time that the Church should adopt a service more suited to an uneducated population, and lend the chapels and schoolrooms for the simple reading of the Holy Scriptures, the singing of hymns, and, possibly, the use of extempore prayers.

Earl MOUNT EDGUMBE: My lord, ladies, and gentlemen, I cannot help adding one or two arguments to what has been said by the proposer and seconder of this resolution, because I think some laymen connected with the county of Cornwall should express an opinion upon so important a subject. I would first especially thank Lord Nelson who has come so far to give us some practical help in forwarding that which I believe we all so earnestly desire—(applause).

The resolution now before the Conference is no unconnected with one I brought forward last year. That one had reference, however, only to the unity of those who belong to the Established Church. This one has reference to the unity which we hope to promote between all those who seek for Christ within these realms. This diocese, I feel, holds a special position in such a matter; it has special advantages and disadvantages. I think we in Cornwall are perhaps free from the trammels which exist in other dioceses. I believe that in no diocese is conciliation towards Nonconformists more essential than in this; and, at the same time, I believe there is no diocese in which conciliation is more likely to be met, at any rate, in a kindlier spirit than in this—(applause). The Canon Missioners who have held missionary meetings in so many parts of the county can testify to that. In politics men are kept asunder, not only by differences, but also by party allegiance arising from a system of party government; but if ever there is a national danger one sees that party spirit overshadowed by the desire to unite in action against the common foe, and I would ask whether there are not special dangers at this present time menacing the Church, sufficient to make all Christians desire to combine to withstand those who would pull down their Christianity—(applause).

The objects of this society are plainly enumerated. There are some, perhaps, as to which we personally can do but little, such as the removal of all defects in the practical working of the Church's system which may give offence to Nonconformists; but there are others, as the promotion of a freer social intercourse between Churchmen and Nonconformists, and the prayer for re-union, which of course each one of us as individuals can help to carry out.

The cordial adoption of the resolution which has been so ably placed before us may do some good in this way, if it stirs up a feeling in us to do all we can to promote unity in the Church of Christ in preparation for His coming, if it leads us to be careful, one and all, laymen and clergymen, in the pulpit and out of the pulpit, to avoid any words or acts which can add bitterness either by hostility or by patronage; if without assuming that unity must be attained by absorption into our own Church as it is, we are guided by the hope that in some way, perhaps by means which none of us can foresee, those who are working out God's intentions in parallel, through separate lines, may be brought nearer, we may be encouraging that general desire for unity which will afford the best prospects of its being realized—(loud applause).

Canon BUCK: My lords, ladies, and gentlemen,—I take shame to myself, and the clergy of my standing, that this question should have been allowed to remain in abeyance for such a time. What does Home Re-union mean? It means unity. Unity is one of the great cardinal doctrines of the Gospel, and, if so, ought it to be allowed to drop out of sight; ought we ought not rather to do all we can to bring it prominently before our people? If we go forth and preach unity as it ought to be preached, I am satisfied the hearts of men will receive it—(applause). I hope, therefore, that this meeting will take up the question earnestly. Thousands, no doubt, will be prejudiced by the thought that we of this generation may not see much fruit, but we must make a beginning. Now is the time to make that beginning, and now is the time for us to make up our minds that things shall not remain longer in the state they have been. Then I think we may go forward, and, perhaps, in a generation or two, our Church and others will be brought together, and the time may not be so very far distant when we may have a united people, a people united in Christ—(applause). I cannot believe, if unity is a doctrine of the Gospel, that the heart of man will refuse it, if it be offered to him as it should be offered—(applause).

The BISHOP then summed up the discussion. He said : We cannot be too thankful for having this subject brought before us in those most able and Christian papers we have just heard read—(applause)—and we cannot be too thankful for the tone the discussion has taken. While on the one hand we are all alive to the fact that premature comprehension might be the introduction of fatal separation, on the other hand we do look forward to comprehension, not premature, which shall be real and lasting union of the Church in Christ. Lord Brougham, some years ago, looking at the state of things in England with quite an outside view, used to say that there was not one Church in England—he was speaking of the Church of England—but that there were two churches which were held together by nothing beyond an external bond, and if that were removed they would fly asunder. I believe a more untrue view of the state of things was never uttered. There are, and always will be, complementary tendencies in the minds of men, which have existed in all schools of philosophy, and must extend to all churches. That seems to be not only a metaphysical but a physical fact, which philosophers have called the phenomenon of polarity. Everything that is beautiful, and good and strong, is produced by the combination of those polar forces. They have no tendency really to fly asunder, owing to their different characteristics, but their tendency is to blend, and as it is in all God's work so it is with the Church of Christ—(applause). Yet all that Lord Brougham feared might come to pass if anything like premature comprehension is produced by a sacrifice of principle. But, on the other hand, we do believe that the Spirit of God comes to all those who, whatever their degree of faith, call upon Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all, but especially of them that believe. If they go on ever invoking with pure hearts the Spirit of God to make his dwelling among them, then surely and certainly union will come to pass, when they are all permeated by the universal Spirit of God, who is the one Spirit which will actually melt all into one another. We have many of us stood on the bridge of Lyons and watched the Rhone and the Saone flowing side by side for miles down but still separate; yet a little further we see that the mingling has begun, and in another half mile no one can tell but that they were one stream. So it will be in the Church of God. Let only such religious feelings, and such philosophical views prevail amongst us in the Church as have been enunciated this afternoon in this room, and let our dissenting bro-

thers go on in their own way, clearly and earnestly seeking the Spirit of God, and endeavouring to arrive at the truth, and the day will come when all parti-coloured streams will be one, flowing to the great ocean at last as one Church, the fulfilment of Christ's own prayer—(applause). I have much pleasure in presenting your earnest thanks to those who have prepared this discussion this afternoon—(loud applause).

The resolution was then unanimously adopted.











